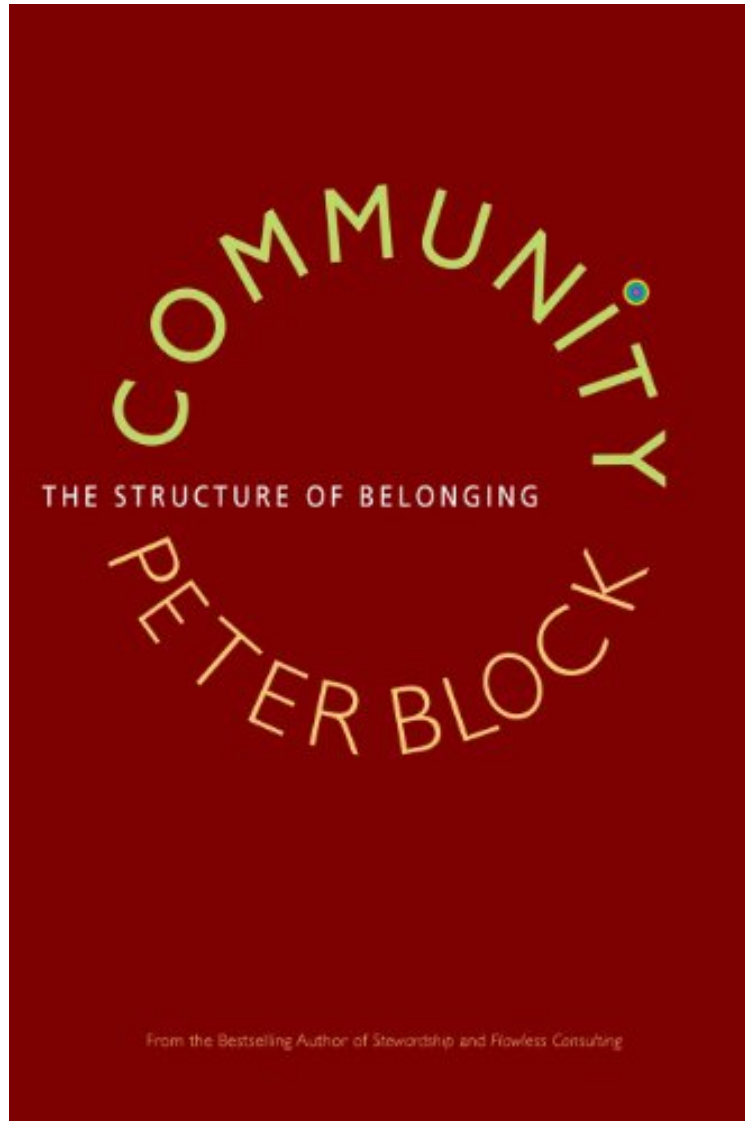


Community: The Structure of Belonging

Peter Block

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Peter Block : Community: The Structure of Belonging before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Community: The Structure of Belonging:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Convening small groupsBy JoyceThe restoration of community is a vital need for us today. Block suggests that the first step to community is to quit thinking of community as a problem and instead to define it as conversations -- conversations of possibility. Block sees the role of leadership as convening small groups, which he sees as the unit of transformation. In starting the conversations in these groups, the leader needs to remember that questions are more transforming than answers; curiosity more useful than advice. He explains what questions have power and what questions squelch power. He also explains how to invite people, how to facilitate

accountability and ownership, and the importance of physical space for meetings and how to design it. Having dealt with these issues a long time myself, I was pleased to see some of my wisdom validated and also to learn important new wrinkles about small groups and community. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Zen and The Art of Community Building By Lee Challenged both democratic and conservative ideologies. At times perhaps a little esoteric, but nonetheless, a strong application intended to transform our ideas about what it means to be a community, to live as empowered citizens rather than "consumers", stop waiting for leaders to save us, to restore trust where it is broken and ultimately (and after a long time of hard work and persistence) end political suffering. Block makes it seem doable. Found myself getting the most out of the details. Might not be great for skimmers. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Power of A Question By Patrick Duggan I was inspired by the ideas on community building, but a little skeptical about the effectiveness of the conversations. Then we convened a church gathering around the ownership conversation and we were amazed at the power of the questions. We began a path to transformation! We intend to gather around all six conversations. A new day is emerging.

Most of our communities are fragmented and at odds within themselves. Businesses, social services, education, and health care each live within their own worlds. The same is true of individual citizens, who long for connection but end up marginalized, their gifts overlooked, their potential contributions lost. What keeps this from changing is that we are trapped in an old and tired conversation about who we are. If this narrative does not shift, we will never truly create a common future and work toward it together. What Peter Block provides in this inspiring new book is an exploration of the exact way community can emerge from fragmentation. How is community built? How does the transformation occur? What fundamental shifts are involved? What can individuals and formal leaders do to create a place they want to inhabit? We know what healthy communities look like; there are many success stories out there. The challenge is how to create one in our own place. Block helps us see how we can change the existing context of community from one of deficiencies, interests, and entitlement to one of possibility, generosity, and gifts. Questions are more important than answers in this effort, which means leadership is not a matter of style or vision but is about getting the right people together in the right way: convening is a more critical skill than commanding. As he explores the nature of community and the dynamics of transformation, Block outlines six kinds of conversation that will create communal accountability and commitment and describes how we can design physical spaces and structures that will themselves foster a sense of belonging. In *Community*, Peter Block explores a way of thinking about our places that creates an opening for authentic communities to exist and details what each of us can do to make that happen.

From the Publisher Praise for Peter Block's *Community: The Structure of Belonging* "From the person who gave us the best book written on business stewardship comes the best book on how to transform the places where we live, work, and play into authentic, effective communities. Some of Peter Block's conclusions may surprise you, but this compelling book is a must for all who love the places we call home enough to rethink our approach to building and maintaining community." --Dennis Bakke, CEO, Imagine Schools, Cofounder and CEO Emeritus, AES Corporation, and author of *Joy at Work* "Every earnest public servant, every volunteer, every disillusioned citizen, every civic leader, and every community activist or businessperson who truly want to make their communities better should read this book. It can serve as a guide or manual, but *Community* at its heart is a book of questions, and Peter gently and persistently reminds us that we are the answers." --James Keene, President, Alliance for Innovation and Western Director, International City/County Management Association "In this wonderfully practical book, Peter Block defines the nature of a community with manageable dimensions, creative directions, and hopeful possibilities. His methods lead us to a restoration of the joy of a genuine common life." --John McKnight, Professor of Education and Social Policy, and Codirector, Asset-Based Community Development Institute, Northwestern University "Peter Block clearly identifies the essential ingredients, qualities, questions, atmosphere, and actions needed to create and build vital communities filled with possibility, generosity, accountability, and deep engagement. Outstanding in its relevance, practicality, and clarity." --Angeles Arrien, PhD, cultural anthropologist and author of *The Second Half of Life: Opening the Eight Gates of Wisdom* "This book is more than practical advice on execution of theory; it is a spiritual primer for the building up of community and transforming hope that we so desperately need in today's world. Peter has touched us once again in that place we call 'soul'." --Clint Kemp, Founding Pastor, New Providence Community Church "Peter's work has become the cornerstone of how our police department has developed over the years. What we have pleasantly discovered is that the more our capacity grows to work in partnership with each other, the more our capacity to serve our community is enhanced." --Michael Butler, Chief of Police, Longmont, Colorado "After being engaged for many years with transformations in the U.S., Latin America, and Africa, it is exciting to find a practical and deep methodology that integrates great ideas and points at new applications. Peter's book is critical for anyone concerned about reenergizing the quality of life in our workplaces and in our communities." --Steve Zaffron, CEO, the Vanto Group, a Landmark Education Company

From the Inside Flap *Community* Most of our communities are fragmented and at odds within themselves. Businesses, social services, education, and health care each live within their own worlds. The same is true of individual citizens, who long for connection but end up marginalized, their gifts

overlooked, their potential contributions lost. What keeps this from changing is that we are trapped in an old and tired conversation about who we are. If this narrative does not shift, we will never truly create a common future and work toward it together. What Peter Block provides in this inspiring new book is an exploration of the exact way community can emerge from fragmentation. How is community built? How does the transformation occur? What fundamental shifts are involved? What can individuals and formal leaders do to create a place they want to inhabit? We know what healthy communities look like--there are many success stories out there. The challenge is how to create one in our own place. Block helps us see how we can change the existing context of community from one of deficiencies, interests, and entitlement to one of possibility, generosity, and gifts. Questions are more important than answers in this effort, which means leadership is not a matter of style or vision but is about getting the right people together in the right way: convening is a more critical skill than commanding. As he explores the nature of community and the dynamics of transformation, Block outlines six kinds of conversation that will create communal accountability and commitment and describes how we can design physical spaces and structures that will themselves foster a sense of belonging. In *Community*, Peter Block explores a way of thinking about our places that creates an opening for authentic communities to exist and details what each of us can do to make that happen.

About the Author Peter Block is an author, consultant, and citizen of Cincinnati, Ohio. His work is about empowerment, stewardship, chosen accountability, and the reconciliation of community.... Peter serves on the boards of directors of Cincinnati Public Radio; Elementz: Hip Hop Youth Arts Center; and InkTank, which offers writing programs for marginalized people. He is also a partner in the Urban Opportunities Alliance, a group of youth- and family-oriented efforts in Cincinnati. He is a member of the advisory board for the Festival in the Workplace Institute, Bahamas. With other volunteers, Peter began A Small Group, whose work is to bring the disengaged into community through the tools of civic engagement